

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

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DRAFTED BY ARA/PAN:PFMORRIS:JVC

APPROVED BY ARA/PAN:PFMORRIS

ARA/PAF:KMARSHALL (DRAFT)

S/AB:AMB. BUNKER (DRAFT)

ARA:AMB. BOWDLER (DRAFT)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PN

SUBJECT: PANAMA TREATY NEGOTIATIONS, FEB 6 BRIEFING

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS HAVE BEEN PREPARED
FOR THE NOON BRIEFING:

Q: WILL YOU COMMENT ON THE REPORT THAT THE U.S. AND
PANAMA HOPE TO HAVE A DRAFT TREATY IN THE NEXT TEN
WEEKS?

A: THE NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BEEN PROCEEDING STEADILY AND
METHODICALLY. WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY THE PROGRESS THAT
HAS BEEN MADE. WE CANNOT MAKE ANY PREDICTIONS AS TO
WHEN A NEW TREATY WILL BE READY, BUT BOTH PARTIES ARE
HOPING FOR A DRAFT TREATY BY THE LATE SPRING.

AMBASSADOR BUNKER WAS MOST RECENTLY IN PANAMA
JANUARY 10 THROUGH 25. TECHNICAL TEAMS ARE
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WORKING IN WASHINGTON NOW. THE UNITED STATES NEGO-

TIATORS EXPECT TO RETURN TO PANAMA FOR FURTHER TALKS
IN LATE FEBRUARY.

Q: ONE NEWS STORY HAS STATED THAT THE EXPIRATION DATE
OF THE NEW TREATY WILL BE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE
NEXT CENTURY. COULD YOU COMMENT ON THAT?

THE NEGOTIATION IS VERY SENSITIVE, INVOLVING AS IT DOES
THE VITAL INTERESTS OF BOTH COUNTRIES. AS IN ALL NEGOTIA-
TIONS, WE HAVE BEEN CONDUCTING IT IN COMPLETE PRIVACY
AND I AM NOT AT LIBERTY TO COMMENT ON SUBSTANCE. HOW-
EVER, I CAN TELL YOU THAT THE QUESTION OF DURATION OF THE
NEW TREATY HAS NOT YET BEEN DISCUSSED. REFERENCES IN
NEWS STORIES TO SPECIFIC DATES MAY REFLECT POSITIONS
ATTRIBUTED TO THE TWO COUNTRIES FROM PRIOR NEGOTIATIONS.
KISSINGER

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